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Senator Cardin Joins EPA Officials in Announcing \$3.4 million for Projects that Will Help Reduce Chesapeake Bay Pollution

34 Environmental Projects Will Protect and Restore the Chesapeake Bay and Local Waterways

BALTIMORE – **U.S. Senator Benjamin L. Cardin** (D-MD) today joined officials from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Chesapeake Bay Program to announce \$3.4 million for 34 environmental projects in the six Chesapeake Bay watershed states and the District of Columbia to help reduce pollution to local streams, creeks and rivers and the Chesapeake Bay. The grants are funded by the EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program and a variety of other federal and private partners. They are administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.

The funding for the projects was awarded through the Chesapeake Bay Small Watershed Grants Program, which provides grants to nonprofit organizations and local governments working to improve the condition of their local watershed.

"The Small Watershed Grants program provides important funding that gives local governments and organizations the tools they need to help improve the overall health of the Chesapeake Bay's watershed," said **Senator Cardin**, a member of the Environment and Public Works Committee. "From planting more trees in urban areas to improving wildlife habitat and minimizing stormwater runoff, these grants result in partnerships that help restore and protect the Bay."

The 2010 grant recipients will develop conservation plans in both urban and rural settings, preserve valuable natural lands, and implement on-the-ground and in-the-water restoration practices throughout the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Many of the projects will employ social media campaigns to fully engage the community in the local restoration and conservation efforts. Some examples of the types of projects funded include:

- Large scale installations of rain gardens & rain barrels;
- Stormwater retrofit and green building design actions for places like schools and urban buildings;
- An "Extreme Stream Makeover" restoration project and other stream or forest restorations;
- A social and educational outreach program to educate citizens about conservation easements; and,
- Several efforts to reduce nitrogen and phosphorus runoff from agricultural operations into local streams.

"Local action is essential to restoring clean water to the region's streams, creeks, rivers and the Chesapeake Bay, and EPA is committed to supporting the efforts of local governments, watershed groups and universities that do incredible work everyday," said **Shawn Garvin**, EPA Regional Administrator. "Clean water is important to every community, so it's vital that these projects will occur in all six states in the Chesapeake Bay watershed and the District of Columbia."

The 2010 Small Watershed Grants were announced today at Dundalk Veterans Park. The project highlights the "Trees for Neighborhoods" initiative of the Baltimore County Department of Environmental Protection and Resource Management. Baltimore County is using its \$50,000 grant to educate homeowners about the benefits of planting trees as a way to reduce polluted runoff.

Polluted runoff from urban and suburban impervious surfaces and agricultural lands continue to be two large sources of nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment to local waterways and the Chesapeake Bay. These grants will help fund the projects necessary to reduce runoff in many areas and from all types of lands, both urban and agricultural, within the Bay watershed.

Since 2000, the Chesapeake Small Watershed Grants program has provided more than \$27 million to support 626 projects around the Chesapeake Bay watershed. These projects have further leveraged close to \$90 million in local matching funds for a total conservation investment in on-the-ground restoration of over \$115 million. The program is administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and funded by the U.S. EPA's Chesapeake Bay Program Office and a variety of annual partners.

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